

Behavioral Approaches to Categorization

1. Definitional approach
2. Prototype approach
3. Exemplar approach

Exemplar Approach

Exemplar approach: determine category membership by comparing the item to exemplars of the category

- ▶ **exemplar:** previously encountered member of a category

Exemplar Approach

- ▶ categories are defined by **multiple examples of actual category members**, not a single averaged prototype

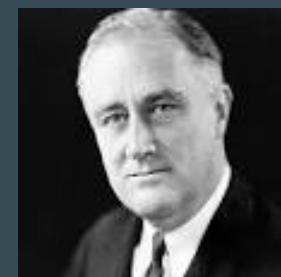


exemplars

prototype

Exemplar Approach

- ▶ categories are defined by **multiple examples of actual category members**, not a single averaged prototype



exemplars

president?

Exemplar Approach



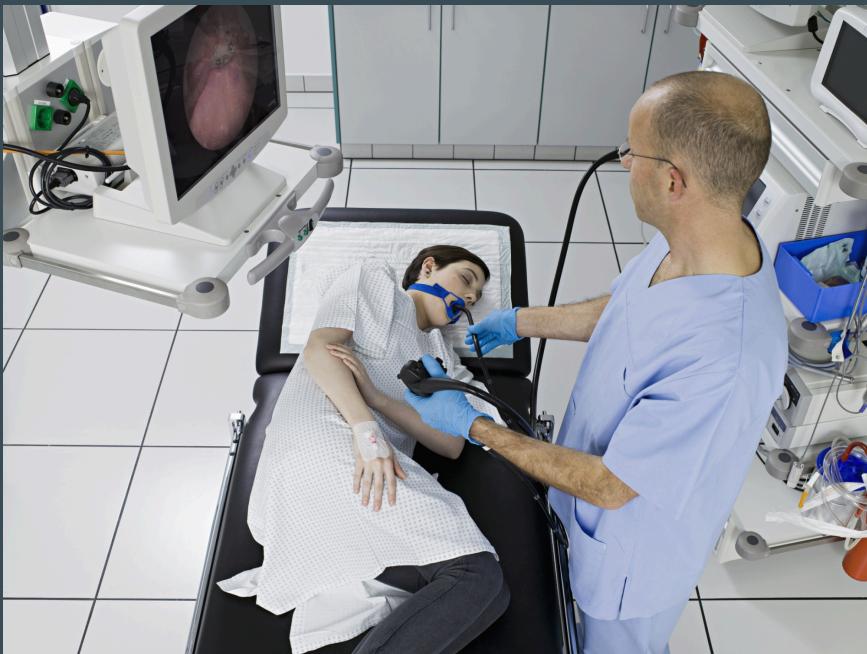
Exemplar Approach

- ▶ works better for smaller categories



Which Approach is Better?

- ▶ we likely use a combination of prototypes and exemplars to categorize things in everyday life



Real Life Implications

Which is the best looking fish?



A



B

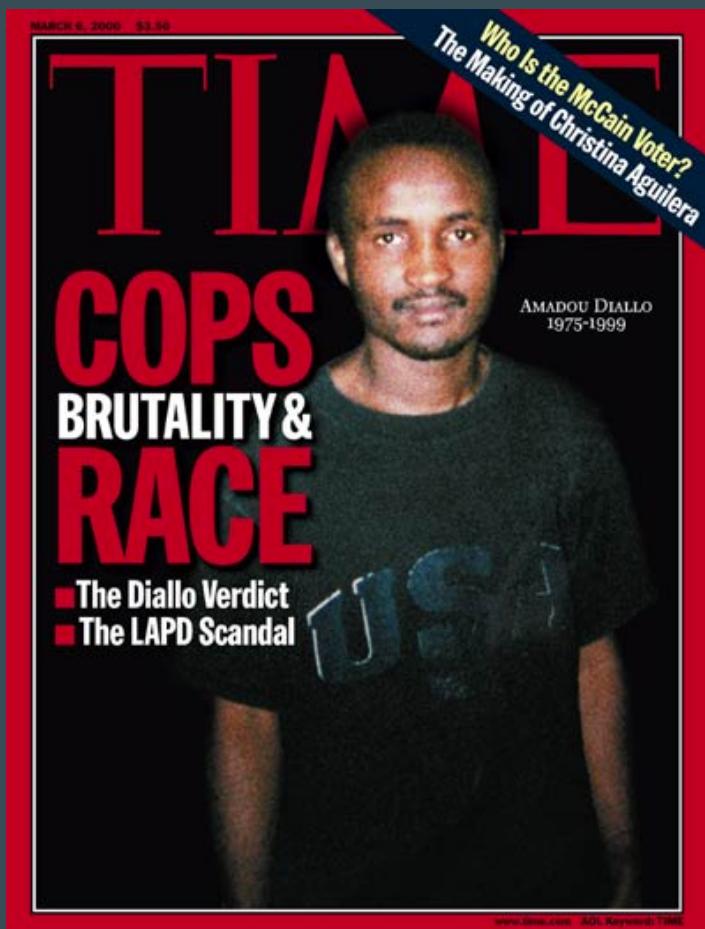


C



D

Real Life Implications



Case of Amadou Diallo

- Matched description of serial rapist
- As cops approached him, reached into pocket to pull out his wallet
- Mistaken officer yelled “GUN!”
- Police fired 41 times
- Diallo was innocent and did not have a weapon